

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2606

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 3980

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, GR, IR

SUBJECT: IRANIAN CONCERNS ABOUT GREECE

1. IN THE COURSE OF A MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON ANOTHER SUBJECT (TEHRAN 3966), MINISTER OF COURT ALAM SAID THE SHAH WAS QUITE CONCERNED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN GREECE. HE THOUGHT THE ABOLITION OF THE MONARCHY WAS A MISTAKE GREECE AND ITS FRIENDS WOULD REGRET.

2. IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR' S QUERY ABOUT THE THRUST OF THE SHAH' S CONCERN, ALAM SAID THAT WHEN THE COLONELS ARE CHALLENGED BY THE LEFT, AS THEY SURELY WILL BE IN TIME AND PERHAPS SUCCESSFULLY, THE PEOPLE WILL BE LEFT WITH NOTHING TO FALL BACK ON. THUS SET ADRIFT, WITH NOTHING TO CHOOSE FROM EXCEPT EXTREMES, GREECE COULD FALL INTO ANARCHY OR AT LEAST CONTINUED UNREST AND UNCERTAINTY A LA ITALIAN STYLE. ALAM SAID THAT ONE COULD HARDLY EXPECT THE COLONELS WOULD REVERSE THEMSELVES AND WE HAD TO ASSUME THAT THEY WOULD INSURE THAT THE PLEBESCITE WENT QUOTE THE RIGHT WAY UNQUOTE. IF THEY DID NOT, THEN THEY WERE REALLY STUPID, HE ADDED.

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3. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THIS WAS SOMETHING THE SECRETARY AND THE SHAH MIGHT WELL TALK ABOUT WHEN THEY MEET JUNE 9 TH.

4. COMMENT: ONE MIGHT ASSUME PART OF THE SHAH'S CONCERN STEMS FROM HIS FEELING THAT ANOTHER BLOW TO THE MONARCHS' CLUB OFFERS A POOR EXAMPLE TO HIS OWN PEOPLE. WE DO NOT THINK THIS IS THE CASE, HOWEVER. HE IS SUPREMELY CONFIDENT OF HIS OWN POSITION AND WITH GOOD REASON. RATHER IT IS LIKELY THAT HE SINCERELY BELIEVES THAT THE MONARCHICAL INSTITUTION IF NOT THE MAN STILL HAS AN IMPORTANT STABILIZING AND UNIFYING ROLE TO PLAY IN MANY TRADITIONAL COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD. ACCORDINGLY ITS DISAPPEARANCE, FOR WHATEVER REASON, IS A MATTER OF REGRET AND CONCERN.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENT: SHAH CONFIRMED FOREGOING IN CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR LATER ON JUNE 8. HE ADDED TWO OTHER POINTS. HE SAID THAT ON HIS RECENT TRIP TO YUGOSLAVIA, ROMANIA, AND BULGARIA, HE HAD CLEARLY SENSED HOW PLEASED THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES WERE WITH THE DEMISE OF THE MONARCHY IN GREECE. IN PHILOSOPHIZING ABOUT THE ROLE OF MONARCHIES, HE POINTED OUT THAT IN TURKEY THE ARMY EFFECTIVELY FUNCTIONS IN THIS CAPACITY. HE DEVELOPED THIS THEME BY POINTING UP THE ROLE OF THE ARMY DURING THE RECENT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION PROCESS IN ANKARA. IN OTHER WORDS, STABILITY IN TURKEY IS MAINTAINED BY THE MILITARY EVEN THOUGH THEY SEEMED DISPOSED TO ALLOW THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE TO PREVAIL PROVIDED THE PENDULUM DOES NOT SWING TOO FAR. HE TERMINATED THIS PART OF THE CONVERSATION BY EXPRESSING THE HOPE THAT HIS PROPHECY ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN GREECE WOULD PROVE UNTRUE BUT AT THE SAME TIME UNDERLINING HIS CONCERN THAT OVER THE LONGER TERM GREECE DID INDEED SEEM HEADED FOR THE TYPE OF POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY WHICH PREVAILS TODAY IN ITALY. HELMS

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